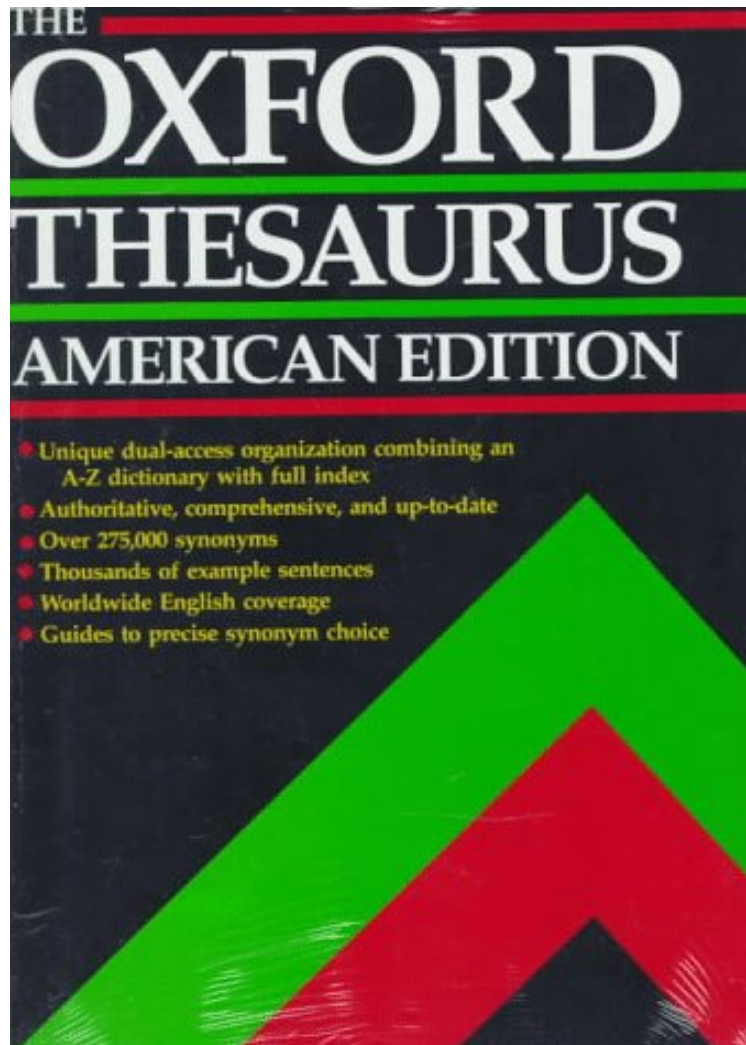


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The Oxford Thesaurus: American Edition

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which too many don't.

Praised in *The New Yorker* as the "lexicographer to the world," Oxford is renowned as the world's leading dictionary maker, the home of the redoubtable Oxford English Dictionary as well as an impressive array of English, foreign language, and subject area dictionaries. An important member in our family of language reference is *The Oxford Thesaurus of American English*, compiled by one of America's pre-eminent lexicographers, Laurence Urdang. Urdang and Oxford have rethought from the ground up the way a thesaurus is organized and used, to create the most authoritative, precise, up to date, and helpful synonym finder available. There are at present two types of thesauruses, based on access systems: the Roget's style, which groups words according to concepts (a viable but awkward system which usually requires considerable flipping back and forth from index to main text), and the Dictionary style, which groups words alphabetically (which allows fast access if the word you have in mind is a headword; but if not, you're stumped). The Oxford Thesaurus of American English combines the best of both styles with a unique double-access system: we've organized the headwords alphabetically--so that more often than not, you can turn right to the main text to find synonyms--but we include an extensive synonym index, which lists over 100,000 words in the main text that are not headwords. Thus writers enjoy both the comprehensiveness of a Roget's and the ease of use of a Dictionary style, in one authoritative volume. The double-access system allows the most precise word selection with the least effort. And to enhance precision even more, Urdang has added several other features to help writers pick the best word for each context. If a headword has more than one sense, he breaks synonyms down into groups, and within each group, he orders words according to how closely they match the meaning of the headword. Moreover, he illustrates each group with a sample sentence, so you can be sure you are making your selection from the right list of alternatives. Urdang provides complete coverage of current English, and for those desiring a richer vocabulary, he supplements the standard synonyms with unusual words and phrases, including regional and idiomatic expressions, slang, colloquialisms, and so forth. And finally, he includes a cross-referencing system within the main text which links related groups of synonyms. Fast and easy to use, up to date, and authoritative, *The Oxford Thesaurus of American English* is an essential tool for anyone who wants to write with more variety, color, and precision. It is a must for all writers, whether novice or expert, student or teacher, business executive or journalist.

.com There is an art to a fine thesaurus. When you seek the right word, you want a thesaurus that's useful (helpful, fruitful, effective), convenient (handy, expedient, user-friendly), and current (contemporary, informed, up-to-date). The Oxford Thesaurus combines the best of two worlds: an A to Z arrangement of words and a Roget's-style index. The first search is as simple as looking up a word in a dictionary, while the synonym index helps fine-tune the intense lexicographic hunt. It requires a delicate balance of many qualities. The Oxford Thesaurus emphasizes current English, but includes enough quaint terms and plenty of regional, idiomatic, and slang terms in English from around the world to provide colorful options. Most entries provide sample sentences, but the bulk of the tome is composed of synonyms, so you needn't wade through lots of excess verbiage when what you really want is the phrase that says what you have in mind, with the right tone and flair. The Oxford Thesaurus makes it effortless. --Stephanie Gold
From Library Journal
These two thesauruses take different approaches to the problem of finding alternative words with similar meanings. Roget's 150-year-old plan of organizing words within eight broad classes has been revised by Chapman to create a simpler, more natural, and contemporary arrangement of 15 new classes. These classes (e.g., body, feelings, place) are further divided into 1,073 categories (e.g., birth, pleasure, space). The advantage of such a scheme is that words with close semantic relationships are grouped together by logical category. This stimulates word associations, the closest of which are found within clusters or domains set off by semicolons. These features are consistent with prior editions of this thesaurus, as is the task of approaching the appropriate category through the use of an extensive index. Urdang's arrangement for *The Oxford Thesaurus* eliminates the double search by alphabetically listing headwords (frequently used words) followed by synonyms ordered according to how closely they match the meaning of the headword. Semicolons separate subgroups of synonyms, and each group has at least one illustrative sentence. Despite its being an "American edition," British and other geographical variations are given much attention. A synonym index may be referred to if the word in mind is not a headword. This book is initially easier and faster to use than Roget's, though it does contain more elaborate instructions. The organization of Roget's is more complex but may prove more utilitarian overall. Instructions are brief, and typefaces and format are more legible. A third variation in thesaurus arrangement is found in Barbara A. Kipfer's *Roget's 21st Century Thesaurus in Dictionary Form* (LJ 9/1/92). All three thesauruses are attractively priced works edited by highly qualified lexicographers and featuring current usage, and all three are recommended for reference collections.- Stanley P. Hodge, Ball State Univ. Lib., Muncie, Ind. Copyright 1992 Reed Business Information, Inc. About the Author About the Editor: Laurence Urdang is a distinguished lexicographer and publisher, founder of Market House Books, and editor of *Verbatim*, the Language Quarterly. He was Editorial Director of *The Collins English Dictionary*, Managing Editor of *The Random House Dictionary of the English Language*, and Editorial Director of *The Longman Synonym Dictionary*.